

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0534
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INFO FPA WASHDC
ALL NATO CAPITALS
USLOSACLANT NORFOLK VA
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 03504

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, NATO
SUBJECT: NATO DEFENSE INITIATIVES: OVERVIEW ASSESSMENT OF
DRAFT EWG COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON LONG-TERM DEFENSE
PROGRAM (LTDP)

REFS: (A) USNATO 3171 DTG 281438Z MAR 78, (B) USNATO 3458
DTG 051639Z APR 78, NOTAL

SUMMARY: OUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF THE EWG'S DRAFT COM-
PREHENSIVE REPORT ON THE LTDP IS THAT IT IS CHALLENGING,
PERHAPS EVEN MORE THAN OUR ALLIES WILL AGREE TO. CONSE-
QUENTLY, WE BELIEVE THAT, IN PURSUING OUR FIXED OBJECTIVE
OF GETTING A REPORT BEFORE MINISTERS/SUMMIT THAT REPRESENTS
THE MAXIMUM THE TRAFFIC WILL BEAR, WE SHOULD GENERALLY
SHIFT OUR TACTICS FROM PRESSING FOR EVEN MORE TO AN
AGGRESSIVE DEFENSE TO CONSOLIDATE WHAT THE US HAS ALREADY
ACHIEVED. THE PAPER AS NOW DRAFTED IS NOT WITHOUT ITS
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FAULTS, BUT HAS THE GREAT MERIT OF PRESERVING MOST TASK
FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS GENERALLY INTACT (TAKING DUE ACCOUNT
OF MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED AT THE MARCH 21-23 EWG MEETING).
CERTAIN AMENDMENTS TO THE PAPER ARE UNDOUBTEDLY CALLED FOR,
BUT WE WOULD HOPE THESE COULD BE HELD TO THE MINIMUM, SO
THAT THE PAPER IS NOT DISCREDITED AND TORN APART, WITH THE
US PULLING ONE WAY AND SOME LAGGARD ALLIES ANOTHER. WE

SUGGEST WE BE GIVEN A GREAT DEAL OF TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY FOR THE APRIL 13 EWG MEETING TO DISCUSS THE PAPER, TO GUARD AGAINST THE BEST BECOMING THE ENEMY OF THE GOOD. IN PARAGRAPH 9 BELOW WE PROPOSE A TEXT FOR A LETTER TO THE EWG CHAIRMAN, COPIES TO ALL EWG MEMBERS, DESIGNED TO PUT CAPITALS ON NOTICE IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING THAT THE US GENERALLY SUPPORTS THE PAPER AND WANTS ITS SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT PRESERVED. THE LETTER ALSO MAKES THE CASE FOR DEALING WITH THE ANNEXES FOR MINISTERS BEFORE THE EWG TURNS ITS ATTENTION TO THE PAPER FOR THE SUMMIT. ACTION REQUESTED: SEE PARAGRAPH 10. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE MADE AN INITIAL REVIEW OF THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP (EWG) ON THE LTDP (AC/281(LTP)WP(78)2 SENT VIA DACOM TO WASHINGTON ON APRIL 6) THAT THE EWG WILL DISCUSS APRIL 13. OUR TENTATIVE ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE IS HAS CARRIED OUT ITS MANDATE FROM THE EWG TO PRODUCE A CHALLENGING DRAFT, DRAWN FROM THE UPPER END OF THE SPECTRUM OF CONSENSUS EMERGING FROM THE THREE-DAY REINFORCED EWG MEETING MARCH 21-23 (REF A).

2. THROUGHOUT THE LTDP EXERCISE, THE US OBJECTIVE, AS WE PERCEIVED IT, WAS TO GAIN THE LARGEST DEGREE POSSIBLE OF MINISTERIAL/SUMMIT AGREEMENT TO A SET OF SUBSTANTIVE, FAR-REACHING, PROGRAMMATIC DEFENSE IMPROVEMENTS. WE HAD EN-CONFIDENTIAL

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VISAGED THAT IN PURSUING THIS OBJECTIVE, THE US MIGHT WELL BE FACED WITH SUCCESSIVE DRAFT REPORTS BASED UPON LEAST COMMON DENOMINATOR ACCEPTANCE, SO THAT AT EACH STAGE OF CONSIDERATION UP TO THE SUMMIT -- EWG, PERMREPS, MINISTERIAL -- WE WOULD BE ATTACKING THE DRAFT REPORT IN ORDER TO PUT MORE SUBSTANCE INTO IT, IN OPPOSITION TO OUR LAG-

GARD ALLIES WHO WOULD BE DEFENDING THE DRAFT IF NOT TRYING TO WEAKEN IT FURTHER.

3. OUR OBJECTIVE REMAINS THE SAME, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE UNANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE "CHALLENGING" REPORT CALLS FOR A CHANGE IN TACTICS. THE SIGNAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GETTING EWG AGREEMENT TO A CHALLENGING DRAFT (ACHIEVED BY THE US DELEGATION LARGELY OUTSIDE FORMAL EWG SESSIONS) AND THE IS' FOLLOW-THROUGH ON THE EWG INSTRUCTIONS HAVE CHANGED THE TACTICAL SITUATION, AT LEAST AS LONG AS THE PRESENT DRAFT SURVIVES WITH CLOSE TO ITS PRESENT SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT.

4. THE PRESENT DRAFT HAS ITS WEAKNESSES -- INTER ALIA IT A) IS WRITTEN IN INTERNATIONAL STAFFESE, B) DOES NOT CON-

TAIN EVERYTHING WE WANT, C) DOES NOT ALWAYS HIGHLIGHT
ITEMS THE US WOULD WANT GIVEN MORE PROMINENCE, D) DOES NOT
SUFFICIENTLY EMPHASIZE THE NEED FOR GREATER ALLIANCE CO-
OPERATION, E) IS NOT COMPLETELY SELF-CONTAINED, THAT IS,
IT IS NECESSARY TO REFER TO THE TASK FORCE REPORTS FOR
DETAILS ON SOME PROGRAMS, F) SOME OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS,
E.G., THOSE FOR C3, ARE FRAMED IN WEAKER LANGUAGE THAN WE
WOULD WISH MINISTERS TO APPROVE, G) TENDS TO BE THIN ON

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RATIONALE. HOWEVER, IT HAS THE GREAT MERIT OF BEING CHAL-
LENGING; INDEED WE BELIEVE OUR ALLIES WILL FIND IT OVERLY
CHALLENGING. TWO WEEKS AGO, DURING THE FORMAL REGISTRA-
TION OF NATIONAL VIEWS AT THE THREE-DAY EWG MEETING, FEW
WOULD HAVE PREDICTED THAT THE PROGRAMS IN THE NINE AREAS
WOULD SURVIVE IN THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE REPORT INTACT
FOR THE MOST PART.

5. WE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT OUR GENERAL LINE BE TO
STAND WITH THE EWG CHAIRMAN, THE IS, AND THE NMAS IN AN
ACTIVE DEFENSE OF THE DRAFT REPORT AGAINST THE ATTACKS OF
THOSE WHO WOULD WEAKEN IT. SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD NOT PRE-
LUDE US FROM PROPOSING THOSE CHANGES CONSIDERED ABSOLUTELY
NECESSARY, NOR FROM SUGGESTING ESSENTIALLY EDITORIAL
CHANGES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE. IT WOULD, HOWEVER, HEAD OFF A

SITUATION IN WHICH THE US IS PULLING THE PAPER ONE WAY AND THE ALLIES ANOTHER, WITH THE RESULT THAT THE PAPER IS TORN APART.

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6. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS NO DISCRETE VOLUME OF SUGGESTIONS THAT WOULD PUSH US BEYOND THE AREA OF STRENGTHENING THE PAPER INTO THE DANGER ZONE OF DISCREDITING IT. IN A SEPTEL, WE WILL PROVIDE OUR ASSESSMENTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS (ANNEXES A TO J) OF THE REPORT DESIGNED FOR MINISTERIAL ACTION, TO INCLUDE OUR RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO WHAT TACK THE US SHOULD TAKE ON THESE SECTIONS AT THE APRIL 13 EWG MEETING. WE WILL BASE THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ON OUR BEST ESTIMATE OF WHAT IS NEEDED IN RELATION TO WHAT THE TRAFFIC WILL BEAR WITHOUT RISKING UNDERMINING THE PAPER. IT IS ALREADY OBVIOUS THAT THE AIR DEFENSE SECTION WILL REQUIRE SOME FUNDAMENTAL REORIENTATION, BUT THIS SHOULD IMPROVE ITS ACCEPTABILITY TO THE ALLIES AS WELL AS TO THE US. TOOLING OTHER SECTIONS MAY ENTRAIN SOME UNDESIRABLE CONSEQUENCES, E.G., ATTEMPTING TO STRENGTHEN THE RATIONALE OR SPELL OUT PROGRAMS IN MORE DETAIL OR MAKE A COMMITMENT MORE BINDING WILL LENGTHEN THE ALREADY LONG PAPER, OPEN THE DOOR TO ATTEMPTS TO WHITTLE AWAY AT THE PROGRAMS, AND PROVOKE NATIONAL RESERVATIONS OR CAVETS.

7. WE WOULD HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT OUR GUIDANCE FOR THE EWG WOULD PROVIDE US ENOUGH TACTICAL LEEWAY TO PLAY THE TACTICAL SITUATION SO THAT THE BEST DOES NOT BECOME THE ENEMY OF THE GOOD.

8. PENDING RECEIPT OF DETAILED GUIDANCE FOR THE APRIL 13 MEETING, WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE WELL TO PUT THE ALLIES ON NOTICE, WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING SO AS TO INFLUENCE ATTITUDES IN CAPITALS, THAT, BASICALLY, THE US SUPPORTS THE PAPER. WE PROVIDE IN PARAGRAPH 9 BELOW THE TEXT OF A PROPOSED LETTER TO THE EWG CHAIRMAN, COPIES
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TO ALL EWG MEMBERS,
STATING THAT IN GENERAL WE WELCOME
THE PAPER AS IT NOW STANDS AND ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT IT.
THE LETTER ALSO SUPPORTS THE CHAIRMAN'S SUGGESTION THAT
THE EWG FIRST ADDRESS THE ANNEXES FOR MINISTERS BEFORE
CONSIDERING THE PAPER FOR THE SUMMIT.

9. BEGIN TEXT OF PROPOSED LETTER TO EWG CHAIRMAN:

MY AUTHORITIES ARE STILL REVIEWING THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON THE LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM (AC/281(LTP)WP(78) 2) BUT HAVE ASKED ME TO PROVIDE THEIR INITIAL, TENTATIVE REACTION TO YOU IN ADVANCE OF THE EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP MEETING APRIL 13.

IN GENERAL, WE ARE VERY FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH THIS DRAFT AND CONGRATULATE THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ON AN EXCELLENT REPORT PRODUCED IN SUCH A SHORT TIME. ON THE LAST AFTERNOON OF OUR THREE-DAY MEETING, MARCH 21-23, THE EWG AGREED THAT THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF SHOULD PRODUCE A CHALLENGING DRAFT, DRAWN FROM THE UPPER END OF THE SPECTRUM OF CONSENSUS ARRIVED AT IN THE COURSE OF THE THREE DAYS OF DISCUSSION -- WE FIND THAT THE IS HAS DONE JUST THAT. THE QUESTION HAS THUS BECOME, HOW WILL NATIONS RESPOND TO THIS CHALLENGE? FOR OUR PART, WE WOULD HOPE TO SEE A REPORT WITH FAIRLY NEAR ITS PRESENT SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT PRESENTED TO DEFENSE MINISTERS. WE WILL, OF COURSE, HAVE SOME POINTS OF DETAIL TO REGISTER AT THE APRIL 13 MEETING, AND MAY WISH TO STRENGTHEN THE WORDING IN SOME INSTANCES, BUT IN GENERAL WE WELCOME THE PAPER AS IT NOW STANDS AND ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT IT.

WE AGREE WITH YOUR SUGGESTION CONCERNING PRIORITY OF EWG

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WORK. AT THISSTAGE, THE FOCUS, WE BELIEVE, SHOULD BE ON THE WORK FOR MINISTERS. ONCE THE ANNEXES ARE RIGHT, IT SHOULD BE A FAIRLY STRAIGHTFORWARD TASK TO GET THE PAPER READY FOR THE SUMMIT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE FEEL THAT TURNING TO THE PAPER FOR THE SUMMIT BEFORE WE SEE WHAT ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS SURFACE FROM THE EXAMINATION OF THE ANNEXES FOR MINISTERS MAY BE AN UNPRODUCTIVE COURSE. THE PRESENT IS DRAFT FOR THE SUMMIT PROVIDES AN ADEQUATE BASE FOR WORK IN DUE COURSE, AND WE RECOMMEND HOLDING OFF ON FINE TUNING IT UNTIL THE EXAMINATION OF THE ANNEXES HAS PROGRESSED TO THE POINT WHERE WORK ON THE SUMMIT REPORT COULD BE USEFUL.

END TEXT.

10. ACTION REQUESTED:

. A) BY OOB APRIL 10, IF POSSIBLE, GUIDANCE ON THE
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PROPOSED LETTER TO THE EWG CHAIRMAN;

. B) BY APRIL 12, GUIDANCE FOR THE APRIL 13 EWG
MEETING. BENNETT

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